

WHY PEOPLE WEAR CLOTHES

FIDM's Just for Educators Classroom Projects & Activities



Objective:

To explore the influence that clothing has on us, why we wear the clothes we do, the meaning of clothing, and any relationship between clothing and culture

Suggested for use in the following departments: *Social Studies, Home Economics*

Student Activities:

Students will be divided into class teams of four. Have each group interview three adults of different ages (i.e. in their 20s, 40s, and 60s) who would have been teenagers at different times in American history. The students will have a prepared list of questions to ask during the interview. A possible follow-up activity would be to have one of these “former teens” who was interviewed come to class and share pictures of his/her clothing as a teenager and discuss how that style was appropriate during the time it was worn.

Arizona State Standards:

• Life Connections

- 2.0 Analyze factors that influence human behavior.
- 2.1 Describe how personal values influence choices and goals.
- 7.0 Integrate strategies for life and career success.
- 7.5 Evaluate professional dress.

• Social Studies: American History

Concept 1. Research Skills for History:

- PO7 Compare present events with past events:
 - a. Cause and effect*
 - b. Change over time*
 - c. Different points of view*

California State Standards:

• Fashion and Interior Design Industry Sector

A5.2 Students understand how fashion and design have been influenced by politics, society, economics, culture, and aesthetics.

• U.S. History and Geography

11.8 Students analyze the economic boom and social transformation of post-World War II America.

8. Discuss forms of popular culture, with emphasis on their origins and geographic diffusion (e.g., jazz and other forms of popular music, professional sports, architectural and artistic styles).

Washington State Standards:

• Essential Academic Learning Requirement –Social Studies: History

2.2 The student will understand how ideas and technological developments influence people, culture, and environment.

• Essential Academic learning Requirement- Social Studies Skills

2.1.2c Identify appropriate people to gain needed information, ask relevant questions, pose follow-up questions: paraphrase conversations.

National Standards:

• Family and Consumer Sciences

- 1.2.4 Demonstrate teamwork skills in school, community, and workplace settings.
- 2.1.2 Analyze how individuals and families make choices to satisfy needs and wants.

• Social Sciences: U.S. History 5-12

- NSS-USH.9-12.10 Understands economic, social, and cultural developments in contemporary United States.

Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Pens and/or Pencils
- Adults of various age groups available for interviews

Warm-Up Exercise:

Ask students the question: Why do we wear clothes? Responses might include the following: self-expression, protection, adornment, identification, to “fit in,” to express values, attitudes, etc.

Ask volunteers to share why they chose what they are wearing. How do their answers relate to the above? Ask students if they believe that the reasons we wear clothing today are different from those in historic times.

Project Guidelines- Group Discussion:

1. Divide class into teams of four. Have each group interview three adults of different ages (i.e. in their 20s, 40s, and 60s) who would have been teenagers at different times. The students may choose the age groups first and then find adults within those age groups or they may choose from any age groups that are available. The educator can determine if the interviewing will be conducted during class time or sometime prior to the next class session.
2. The interview should include questions regarding how the individuals dressed when they were teenagers.
 - How does that differ from today?
 - What are the similarities?
 - Was clothing more or less modest than today?
 - Was clothing a representation of their heritage?
 - Did they use decorative adornment?
 - Did they wear a uniform for their job?
 - How do they feel about the clothing teenagers wear today, i.e. values and attitudes?
 - Ask students to present their findings to the class and to draw conclusions based upon those findings as to the clothing of teens today compared to those in history.
3. Have students find socially relevant information from the time of the trend (item's peak popularity).
4. Have students present their findings to the class by giving a five-minute oral report on how this fashion trend/item was a "sign of the times" in the context of social history.

Possible Follow-up:

Invite one of those "former teens" who was interviewed to come to class and share pictures of his/her clothing as a teen and to discuss how that style was appropriate to the time it was worn.